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REMARKS
Secretary of State John Kerry
At the African Union 50th Anniversary Summit Leaders Dinner

Thank you very much. Good evening, everybody. The last thing anybody needs is a long speech after a long (inaudible) middle of dinner. So let me just say very, very quickly I want to thank (inaudible) Dlamini Zuma. I thank her for her stewardship (inaudible) and Prime Minister Hailemariam for his welcome here and for his leadership of the African Union.

Let me just say (inaudible) that without exaggeration, the legacy of the progress in the African Union over its first half century I think (inaudible) really excites us about the possibility of the next 50 years. The United States joins with so many other nations – the Secretary General, Russia, many other friends that are here – all to applaud the remarkable accomplishments, to work together and solve (inaudible) peace, security challenges, (inaudible), trade, defense, democracy, good governance, human rights. And I know that all of you are acutely tuned into and sensitive to the way that Africa is looking forward (inaudible) and the way that it's looking forward literally excites the world. And your commitment to move forward has put Africa in a position to seize the 21st century in ways that will transform the lives of millions of people on this continent yet also in the world.

I am privileged also to share on a personal level an affection that my wife Teresa (inaudible) about Africa years ago. (Inaudible) she was born during some of those questionable days – today, but obviously not by her choice, born in what today is Mozambique. She grew up in what is now Maputo. She studied in Johannesburg, and as a student she was proud to march against apartheid. That was the old Africa. (applause). That was the old Africa. We have come here because of the efforts of Africans to celebrate the new Africa. What an incredible, incredible journey as you take on complex challenges and transform yourselves into one of the most creative, exciting, and promising places on the planet.

Yes, there are struggles. Of course there are. But today, war and strife in Africa are less common than freedom and development. Today, the rule of strongmen is less common than multiparty democracies. Credible elections, peaceful transfers of power, like those that we recently saw in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Zambia, where competing candidates go to the courts instead of the streets, as in Kenya and in Ghana. These are the

true marks of democracy and change. I will personally say that I will never forget. I worked very hard on the CPA. I've worked very hard on Sudan and (inaudible) South Sudan.

And I'll never forget the day that I stood in Juba as I went around to polling places and I listened to people excited at the opportunity to vote. And one woman was talking about how hard it was, and I turned to her and I said, "Please don't get so impatient that you leave." She looked at me and she sort of laughed as she said, "Senator, I've been waiting 59 years for this moment. I'm not leaving." The excitement of people to be able to finally vote, that was a remarkable day July 9th when finally a new nation came about. And we dare not forget that it came about not through force but through peaceful and careful negotiation matched by great patience, a lesson that referenda (inaudible) teaching and learning and passing on in country after country.

May I say one other quick thing that I want to share with you? One of the most breathtaking accomplishments on earth is the fact that today more people in Africa have access to drugs that combat AIDS and HIV than are people contracting those diseases. This is a transition of enormous proportion that everyone ought to be proud of. This year marks the 10th anniversary of PEPFAR, and it's one of the programs that I am proudest of to have led through the United States Senate. I want to thank Ambassador Eric Goosby for his extraordinary work and stewardship of this program. Today in Ethiopia, we can finish what we started and we can witness an AIDS-free generation in the entire world (inaudible).

Finally, the great challenge that we all understand (inaudible). As we celebrate this 50th anniversary, six of the world's ten fastest-growing countries are right here, and companies all over the world are taking off and coming here, and African companies are (inaudible) kind of growth we saw in Asia. But I will say this to you: Africa is home to the youngest population on earth, a population that is increasingly educated (inaudible) one-to-one to the rest of the world. And while nearly all of the leaders here are older than the African Union, the vast majority of Africans are younger than the African Union. Sixty percent of Africans are under the age of 30. In the next ten years, there will be more than 100 million more school-aged children in Africa. By the year 2050, more than a quarter of the world's workforce will be African. And in the next three generations, more than 40 percent of the entire world's youth will live in Africa. This is not just a challenge. This is an extraordinary opportunity, not just for Africans but for the world. But we will have to be vigilant (inaudible) education, jobs, and opportunity (inaudible).

On behalf of President Barack Obama, who is very much looking forward to visiting Tanzania, South Africa, and Senegal next month, I want to assure you that the United States of America is prepared and will stand united with Africa as we go forward. We look forward to partnering. The proverb tells us, "If you want to go quickly, go alone. But if you want to go far, go together." In the coming days, Africa and the Americas go further than anyone could have imagined five or perhaps five decades ago. And I will tell you this: We are determined to do it together. Thank you very much for this celebration. (Applause.)